

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

AID-05 EB-07 /078 W

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R 270958Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8955

INFO AMCONSUL MEDAN

AMCONSUL SURABAYA

USMISSION USUN

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 7810

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR MILI ID

SUBJ: INDONESIA'S POWER STRUCTURE AND DURABLE ELITE

1. THERE FOLLOWS THE SUMMARY OF JAKARTA A-103(BEING
POUCHED TO ADDRESSEES) WHICH, BECAUSE OF THE IMMINENT
MEETING OF PRESIDENT SUHARTO AND FORD, MAY BE USEFUL AS
BACKGROUND MATERIAL.

2. DURING ALMOST A DECADE IN POWER THE SUHARTO GOVERNMENT
HAS SHOWN A HIGH DEGREE OF INTERNAL STABILITY, EVEN DURING
CRISES SUCH AS THE JANUARY 1974 JAKARTA RIOTS. THE POWER
STRUCTURE THAT EXISTS TODAY IS LITTLE CHANGED FROM THE
EARLY YEARS OF THE REGIME. PRESIDENT SUHARTO, AT THE APEX
OF THE AUTHORITARIAN, PERSONALISTIC, HIGHLY CNETRALIZED
SYSTEM, ENJOYS BROAD AUTHORITY, BASED ON THE CONFIDENCE
AND SUPPORT OF THE ARMED FORCES. FOR ADVISORS AND
ADMINISTRATORS, SUHARTO CONTINUES TO RELY PRINCIPALLY ON
SENIOR MILITARY COLLEAGUES, MANY OF WHOM ARE LONGSTANDING
PERSONAL ASSOCIATES, PLUS A NUMBER OF CIVILIAN ECONOMIC
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EXPERTS. POLICY AND DECISION MAKING PROCESS DOES NOT

INVOLVE FORMAL STRUCTURE SO MUCH AS PRESIDENT'S CONFIDENCE IN INDIVIDUALS. THOSE WHO INFLUENCE POLICY CHANGE ACCORDING TO THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH PRESIDENT. EXCEPT IN ONE AREA--UNITY OF REGIME AND ARMY, WHERE DECISIONS PROBABLY MORE IN NATURE OF CONSENSUS AMONG SMALL GROUP OF ARMY OFFICERS--PRESIDENT PROBABLY MAKES FUNDAMENTAL DECISIONS PERSONALLY, BUT ONLY AFTER CONSULTING WITH SMALL CIRCLES OF PEOPLE WHOSE COMPOSITION VARIES ACCORDING TO SUBJECT(EG, INTERNAL SECURITY, POLITICAL STRUCTURE, FUNCTIONING OF ECONOMY/DEVELOPMENT PLANS). INDIVIDUALS INFLUENCE DEPENDS ON WHETHER HE IS INCLUDED IN CONSENSUS GROUP AND WHETHER HE BELONGS TO ONE OR MORE OF OTHER CIRCLES. FEW FOREIGN POLICY QUESTIONS ARE DECIDED WITHOUT REFERENCE TO SECURITY OR ECONOMIC ASPECTS; FOREIGN MINISTER MALIK, THUS, PROBABLY HAS LIMITED ROLE IN MAKING POLICY.

3. OUTSIDE THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE, THE CENTERS OF POWER WITHIN THE ADMINISTRATION REMAIN THE DEFENSE MINISTRY, THE INTERIOR MINISTRY THE INTELLIGENCE APPARATUS, CERTAIN ECONOMIC MINISTRIES AND AGENCIES, AND THE STATE OIL CORPORATION. THE INDIVIDUALS AT THE TOP ARE ALL PERSONS PROMINENT IN THE REGIME FROM THE BEGINNING, EXCEPT FOR THE DEPARTURE OF GENERAL SUMITRO AND THE SIDELINING OF MANY OF HIS ASSOCIATES FOLLOWING THE JANUARY 1974 TROUBLES. ALI MURTOPO AND OTHER CONFIDENTIAL ADVISORS OF SUHARTO, WHOSE ROLE WAS PUBLICLY DEEMPHASIZED AFTER JANUARY 1974, STILL EXERCISE AN IMPORTANT DEGREE OF INFLUENCE BUT THEIR IMPORTANCE IS LESS THAN BEFORE. "THE TECHNOCRAT" ECONOMIC MINISTERS, DESPITE CONTINUING TENSION BETWEEN THEM AND SOME OF THE SENIOR MILITARY, HAVE, WITH SUHARTO'S PERSONAL BACKING, MAINTAINED THEIR POSITION WITHIN THE ADMINISTRATION.

4. INTRA-ADMINISTRATION COMPETITION FOR POWER CURRENTLY IS SHARPEST BETWEEN PERTAMINA(STATE OIL CORPORATION) PRESIDENT IBNU SUTOWO AND THE TECHNOCRATS, WHO ARE PRESSING FOR A GREATER ROLE IN DECISIONS CONCERNING PERTAMINA'S FINANCES AND NON OIL ACTIVITIES. THERE ARE ALSO DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FOREIGN MINISTER MALIK AND THE MILITARY OVER HOW INDONESIA SHOULD ACCOMMODATE TO A COMMUNIST INDOCHINA AND THE EXTENT

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TO WHICH RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION AND CHINA SHOULD BE STRENGTHENED. THESE ARE NOT OF MAJOR IMPORTANCE. THE OLD RIVALRY BETWEEN THE ALI MURTOPO PALACE GUARD AND THEIR MILITARY COLLEAGUES HAS BEEN MUTED SINCE THE DEPARTURE OF SUMITRO.

5. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE, REALIGNMENTS AND CHANGES IN PERSONAL COULD ARISE FROM A VARIETY OF FACTORS: THE

APPROACH OF THE 1977 ELECTIONS, PRESSURE TO SHOW GREATER
PROGRESS IN MEETING INDONESIA'S DEVELOPMENT NEEDS, AND THE
RISE OF A NEW GENERATION OF MILITARY OFFICERS. WE EXPECT
THE PACE OF CHANGE TO REMAIN SLOW DURING THE BALANCE OF
PRESIDENT SUHARTO'S PRESENT TERM, WHICH ENDS IN 1978,
BUT IT COULD WELL BE QUICKER THAN DURING THE LAST TWO YEARS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESIDENT, POLITICAL STABILITY
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 JUN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975JAKART07810
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750224-0089
From: JAKARTA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750610/aaaaaiqz.tel
Line Count: 122
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <02 JUL 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <10 NOV 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: INDONESIA'S POWER STRUCTURE AND DURABLE ELITE
TAGS: PINS, MILI, PINR, ID, (SUHARTO)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006